



State of Connecticut
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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STATE REPRESENTATIVE PATRICIA WIDLITZ

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 6337

AN ACT CLARIFYING THE SCOPE OF SOLAR ELECTRICITY WORK

Representative Taborsak, Senator Doyle and members of the General Law Committee:
Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today in support of HB 6337. My name is State Representative Pat Widlitz and I represent the 98th District which includes the towns of Guilford and Branford.

During the 1970's federal incentives and limited oversight led to a proliferation of solar contractors, some of whom lacked the expertise required to provide good quality solar installations. As a result the public lost confidence in the expertise of installing contractors and the industry declined.

As technology improved and the solar industry re-emerged the need was obvious for a licensing structure that would provide consumers with a high degree of confidence in the expertise of installing contractors.

In 2005, I was contacted by my constituent, Everett Barber, a solar energy expert who had been working with Richard Hurlburt at DCP to develop language for proper licensure. I requested the assistance of General Law Committee Chairman, Rep. Chris Stone, and on 5/31/05 we passed HB 6732 in the House. I explained the bill on the House floor and it passed unanimously as it did in the Senate on 6/6/05.

I am testifying today to clarify that the unquestionable legislative intent was to allow the new classification of the PV-1 contractor license holder to complete the entire working system, including connecting the system to the service panel at the home. That was clearly understood by the General Law Committee Chairmen, the Dept. of Consumer Protection, the solar contractors and the members of the General Assembly.

Since the passage of the bill over 1500 separate PV installations have been completed in Connecticut with no record of safety incidents or known consumer complaints related to solar

system installations. The PV-1 contractors have successfully "turned the industry around" and have greatly contributed to green energy production in our state.

It has recently come to my attention that the Electrical Work Examining Board (EWB) has taken a position counter to the legislative intent of PA 05-211. I urge support of HB 6337 and enlist the Committee's support to maintain the intent and integrity of the underlying legislation which established the solar license framework.

Thank you for your attention to this issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Pat Widlitz". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Patricia Widlitz
State Representative, 98th District